



















































The One Constant

by Redbluezero

This shouldn't be awkward. I've met her family before. I've known her for years. So why am I so nervous?! Habuko reached for Tsuyu's hand under the table, grabbing it tightly. Tsuyu quickly looked at her girlfriend, wondering what was wrong. Habuko didn't return the eye contact, probably because her quirk would paralyze Tsuyu for a few seconds. Instead, she just stared at her own shaking leg.

"Habuko, is everything alright?" Tsuyu whispered. Habuko nodded, not wanting to admit that she felt like there was a mountain of pressure on her shoulders. She just couldn't mess up.

"I-I just gotta use the bathroom, be right back!" Habuko exclaimed, voice quivering ever so slightly. She burst up from her seat and smoothed out her skirt. Tsuyu's parents gave her dubious looks, their eyes burning through her sanity. Habuko shivered. Great. Way to start off dinner. They can totally tell I'm nervous! At least Tsuyu's siblings were too fixated on their phones or crayons to notice. Habuko worried as she ran toward the bathroom. She got in, looked at herself in the mirror. There she was, every scale on her face accounted for and each strand of fluffy hair in place. She sighed. Sometimes she wondered how she had even gotten a girl like Tsuyu, but now wasn't the time for that. Right now she had to look and act really impressive. She was seventeen, almost eighteen, for crying out loud! Soon enough she'd be off to college, and Tsuyu would begin working at a hero agency. Because of this, her and Habuko decided it'd be convenient to move into a small apartment together. The school and agency were close to each other, her and Tsuyu had been dating since the end of middle school, it was time to take the next step. However, they had yet to ask Tsuyu's parents about it. Tsuyu still lived with them, but they were always away. Tsuyu practically raised her siblings. Her brother, Samidare, was 13 now, but they were unsure if he could take care of his 7 year old sister, Satsuki, by himself. They had to think about all these things first. Habuko slapped her cheeks.

"I can do this," she said, looking herself in the eyes. Talking to a mirror always helped her, somehow.

"I've known them for a while. They like me. They were fine when Tsuyu and I announced that we're dating. I'm sure they will say yes, and even if they don't, they'll be calm about it. I'm Habuko Mongoose and I'm fine!" Habuko gave herself a little pep talk. Her yellow eyes shined bright with excitement. Feeling more confident, she left the bathroom and sat back down at the table. Tsuyu smiled at her as she did, glad that her girlfriend

was back and obviously less nervous. Suddenly, the server arrived with everyone's food. Great, just as I'm about to say something the food comes. Gosh, I'm so impatient! Habuko thought to herself. She tried to eat her soup as fast as possible, but realized she might've come off as rude if she rushed. So instead, she waited and hoped the nervousness wouldn't return. However, it wasn't her that began the important conversation. It was Tsuyu. Her parents, Ganma and Beru, were taking a break from their extravagant meals, choosing to strike up conversation with one another instead. Tsuyu interrupted them almost excitedly. Habuko knew what was going to happen, but she felt ready.

"Yes, Tsuyu?" they asked. Tsuyu looked antsy, fiddling with her hands and a small blush coming onto her face. Habuko couldn't help but chuckle at the sight.

"Well, Habuko and I have been talking about some stuff. We're both graduating high school soon. We're growing older, and life seems pretty in place. So... we were thinking that maybe Habuko and I could--" Tsuyu began very calmly, but Habuko was so excited she had to finish for her.

"Get an apartment and move in together?! If it's alright with you, there's many complications, but I really do love Tsuyu and I--" this time Habuko was cut off. Ganma was laughing! For a second there, Habuko felt worry wash over her again. Was Tsuyu's father upset and just hiding his anger behind a smile? But she double checked, and Ganma's grin seemed genuine. She snuck a glance at Tsuyu, who was very embarrassed.

"Ganma, please, relax. The girls look very confused!" Beru scolded, although she had a grin on her face as well. Ganma rubbed his eyes and let his laugh fade away. He began to explain.

"You know, Tsuyu, your mother and I have been planning on settling down. You're right, life is pretty swell. You're a pro-hero, pretty much everyone's dream. Your brother is older now, too. We always wanted to stay with you three more, but work was very dependent on us. But this really is perfect timing. It'll be a bit sad to see you go, Tsuyu, but we know you're in good hands," Ganma said mellowly. He put his hands over Tsuyu's and smiled. His eyes were full of melancholy, but Habuko felt as if she was going to cry out of just happiness. They'd gotten the okay from Tsuyu's parents! Her future with Tsuyu was in sight! Fantasies of their life together began swirling in her head. Every day, she would wake up next to Tsuyu. They'd eat breakfast together and get ready to leave. And every evening, they'd get back home and eat dinner, then wind down and cuddle each other to sleep. It truly was a dream come true. Of course, Habuko forgot one last thing. Once she remembered, the worry came back and her fantasies came to a halt.

“Samidare, Satsuki, stop playing for a second. Your sister has something very important to say to you,” Ganma quickly tapped his younger children on their shoulders. Their gazes were now fixed on Tsuyu, occasionally shifting over to Habuko. When they first met her, they were quite intimidated. But eventually, they got used to the snake girl. Seeing her around the house was very common, and if she made Tsuyu happy, they were perfectly fine with Habuko. The two really cared for their sister, since she practically raised them. It made Tsuyu feel a little bit bad for having to announce that she was moving out. But Tsuyu was no longer a tadpole, and it was time to go off on her own. Well, not completely alone. She had her wonderful girlfriend Habuko by her side. In fact, she had her arm around Tsuyu, as to reassure her. They both gulped.

“Samidare, Satsuki. I love the both of you very very much. You are amazing children with bright futures ahead of you. I’m glad I’ve seen you grow this much. But Habuko and I... We’re going to move into our own home together. Which means I won’t be living at home with you guys anymore. You won’t see me everyday. It’s a little bit sad, but I’ll come visit. And you’ll see me on TV doing hero things all the time! So please don’t cry,” Tsuyu explained, the last part more a message to herself. Her eyes watered as her siblings looked at her in disbelief. It was a hard thing to handle. But soon enough, they came around.

“So long as you’re happy, sis, I don’t mind,” Samidare replied quietly. He had a bittersweet smile on his face, but his eyes were on the table. Satsuki seemed a bit bittersweet too, and she asked if she could go to Tsuyu and Habuko’s apartment from time to time. The answer was obviously yes, and Tsuyu pat her sister on the head. The whole family, including Habuko, was very happy now. They finished their meals gradually, and as they were getting up to leave, Habuko whispered to Tsuyu,

“I’m the luckiest girl on the planet right now. I love you.” Tsuyu blushed, but then gave Habuko a quick kiss on the cheek. The drive back to Tsuyu’s house was very mellow, ambient music playing from the car radio. Tsuyu and Habuko leaned on each other as they watched the world zip by from the window.

“Hey, look, if I breathe, the window fogs up,” Tsuyu commented. She slid her finger down the window, making a face. After a while, you could tell she had drawn herself. Habuko laughed.

“Well, here’s me,” Habuko said as she scribbled what only Tsuyu could comprehend as Habuko. She was a bit embarrassed at her lame drawing, but to Tsuyu it was the Mona Lisa.

“Well, we’re missing one thing,” Tsuyu whispered. Habuko looked at her with a confused face, but just observed. Tsuyu had drawn a heart right in between their self portraits. The two chuckled.

“Gosh, you’re so sappy,” Samidare commented, noticing what they’d done. But Tsuyu and Habuko didn’t care. They were hopelessly in love.

It was eleven at night, and the Asui residence was silent. Everyone had gone to sleep, except for Tsuyu and Habuko. However, they were whispering sweet nothings to each other so it didn't make much noise.

“I can’t believe we’re gonna be living together,” Tsuyu said excitedly. Her arms tightened around Habuko’s waist, and she pressed her face into her back. Habuko enjoyed Tsuyu’s warmth, even though they were underneath mountains of covers. It was autumn, after all.

“Me neither, Tsuyu. What do you think our middle school selves would think if they saw us here like this?” Habuko asked, giggling at the thought.

Tsuyu chuckled as well. She thought back to her first encounter with Habuko. She thought she was a strange girl, but really she just wanted a friend. Tsuyu needed one too, though she never admitted it, and the two hit it off immediately. When they graduated middle school, they were so heartbroken about leaving each other that they confessed in the moment. Tsuyu could clearly remember how many tears she shed when she realized Habuko loved her too. It’d been a tough high school journey, but it was almost over. No more long distance phone calls, no more hefty date organization. Just them, together, forever. Habuko was thinking the same thing, and she honestly couldn’t want anything more. Maybe her future with Tsuyu was hazy. Being a pro hero is tough, and adult life is complicated. Then there’s next steps in relationships, like deciding when it was the right time to pop the question. Oh goodness, the question. Habuko shivered. Her mind scrambled with so many possibilities. But there was one constant— Habuko and Tsuyu were together.

You Finally Did It

By Ariiems

“So...” Mina placed her hands on Tsuyu’s desk, leaning as she casually dragged the vowel longer than needed, “Have you even tried looking for a prom date yet?”

Tsuyu stared up at her friend, large eyes scanning her face in a questioning manner, “Erm... No...? I’m not interested. I’ve said that,” She then sighed, closing her eyes in a calm fashion, “I’ve said it’s not really my... thing.”

Mina grumbled to herself, scrunching her nose as she made her way to her own desk, making a dramatic sigh while she sat. She side-eyed her friend, seeing if her display was phasing her in any way. Her face sank once she realized it wasn’t, much to her dismay.

“But Tsu...” She huffed, “Come on!” You’re one of the only students here not going!”

This was when Tsuyu simply decided to stop talking. She knew her friend would pester her until the event passed, so she simply waited for the bell to ring to signal the beginning of class.

Really, it wasn’t that she didn’t want to go, she felt awkward about looking for someone to go with. With Mina asking about her date at least once a day, she felt pressured. This was normal for Mina. The two were close, and she often pushed Tsuyu to her limits; most of the time unknowingly. This didn’t much frustrate her, as she was tolerant, but it was draining.

“What about Ochako?” Mina’s voice broke Tsuyu from her trance, causing her to meet her friend’s gaze, “I mean... I’m not dumb! I know you have eyes for her.”

This statement caused Tsuyu to flush. She turned to Mina, eyebrows drawn together in a concerned manner. She hadn’t realized she could read her so well. Tsuyu had always considered herself rather unreadable, so this was somewhat of a shock to her. Staying silent for a moment, the frog girl averted her gaze as Mina’s eyes bore into her, trying to prod the truth from her in any way she could.

She sighed, pursing her lips, “I didn’t think I was obvious.”

“You aren’t. I’m just really good at reading people’s feelings like that,”

Mina grinned, something cheesy and picturesque, “Come on, Tsu! I’ll help you!”

The thought of having Mina as her wingman in a situation like this wasn’t extremely appealing to Tsuyu. Really, she wished she’d drop the whole idea after the many times she’d made it obvious she wasn’t interested.

And yet, here she was. Agreeing to the girls promised success, and hoping this wouldn't ruin her chances.

“Hah... Wow! Today has been pretty okay, hm?” Ochako hummed about as she walked to the courtyard with her friend

“Oh it's been great,” Mina punctuated her statement with a laugh, and a wink in Jirou's direction.

Throughout the day, Mina had taken time to fill Jirou and Momo in on her master plan through text. Momo, while thinking the plan was rather iffy, agreed; while Jirou was excited about the idea, and thought this was a way to finally get the two girls to be open and honest with themselves as well as each other.

Of course, this wouldn't be without some preparation, and since Mina had her own plans, she had to have her own volunteers to carry her plan out while she oversaw. Determined didn't even begin to describe her unbelievable motivation when it came to the situation.

Being the supportive girlfriend she is, Momo'd agreed to the plan when Jirou had readily agreed in the group text the three had. Though, the whole “setting two friends up” thing wasn't really her thing; she'd had enough trouble getting her own feelings out to Jirou the months beforehand.

Though, this was thanks to Mina, as well. Really, Momo thought, Mina was to thank for a lot of relationships around the academy, though she seemed to be struggling with her own. Maybe they weren't her personal preference... That seemed plausible. She figured she wouldn't push her for it, though. As long as her friend was happy, she was as well.

“So,” Jirou took the reins of the conversation, “Ochako. Any plans for the dance this weekend, or are you staying in?”

The question seemed to take the brunette by surprise, rosy cheeks looking even redder, “Ah, well. Hm.. You know, I'd like to go! I've been on the line about it, really.”

Jirou shot Mina a knowing look. “Well, even if you don't go to the dance... You could always join Momo and I for... Dinner?” Jirou raised an eyebrow with this statement, heavy eyes genuine in her offer.

“Oh, no I couldn't intrude on that... That'd be rude,” Ochako laughed softly, waving a hand dismissively.

“We insist!” Jirou gestured to a nodding Momo, cocking her head to the side.

Ochako pursed her lips a bit, looking to the side in thought before she sighed, “I mean... I don’t see why I couldn’t come alone... As long as you don’t think it’d be an issue...”

“Great!” Mina piped up, grinning all the while.

While she wouldn’t be attending with them, this meant her plan was going the right direction. This meant she was wholly correct in convincing Tsuyu to let her be a... wingman of sorts. She was incredibly proud of herself, even if Tsuyu wasn’t so sure about the situation.

This didn’t stop Mina.

“Ah, just make sure you dress nicely, we are going somewhere nice. Is that okay?” The words sounded casual, yet informative, as Momo spoke them. She smiled softly in Ochako’s direction, her cheeks rosy. Her calm demeanor always left her friends at ease, and this wasn’t any different with Ochako.

“Will do!” Ochako smiled in return, bright grin shining brighter than the sun.

“Well... That’s figured out...” Mina leaned back into her chair, shoving a chip into her mouth as she eyed Tsuyu.

“So she... agreed?” Tilting her head to the side, Tsuyu silently second guessed her friend’s plan.

Mina nodded in an enthusiastic manner, crunching away on her snack before she spoke again, “Even Camie said it’s foolproof. I’m helping you get your girl!”

“My... Girl... Don’t call her that, she’s not my girl...” Tsuyu furrowed her eyebrows, frowning.

“She will be soon enough,” Mina shrugged her comment off, “This is bound to work, Tsu! Like, 100 percent, Ochako is yours.” With this, she smirked in a smug fashion, her hands behind her head as she lounged.

“As... As long as you’re sure...” Tsuyu sounded questionable as she spoke, as if she weren’t a lick confident in the idea, “I’m just not sure how tricking her into a date with me would... Work?”

“I think it’ll go fine. Listen, I’m pretty sure she feels some kind of way about you, too. This is going to be fine, alright? I’m certain of it. Trust me here.”

Tsuyu sighed, frown elongating as she thought, “As long as you’re sure this won’t mess up our friendship.”

“That’s the spirit! Now go prepare yourself for tomorrow!” Mina waved her friend off, continuing to munch on the snacks she’d brought to the dorm lobby, a bubbly grin on her face.

As Tsuyu nodded and walked off, Mina immediately pulled her phone from her pocket, typing out a message to Jirou very quickly to let her know things were going perfectly according to plan.

Meanwhile, Tsuyu sat in her dorm contemplating what to do about the situation. She had nice clothes to wear; which she set aside for events like this. They weren’t often, but they still seemed like a necessity for her to own. If something came up, she’d have a nice outfit to wear. Sure, it was just slacks and a vest, paired with a white button up and tie, but it was better than her normal casual clothing.

This, she decided, was what she’d wear. Simple, nice, and utterly her. Ochako, however, wasn’t having such an easy time. She’d had quite a few dresses to choose from. So, there she sat in the middle of her floor, each option sprawled in front of her as she hummed to herself in thought, carefully considering her options.

On one hand, she could go with a more casual dress; or something out there, and sparkly. Squinting at her options, she picked up a strapless mint-colored dress with a black accent belt. She tilted her head before nodding decidedly, a hum of approval as she piled the rest of her clothing back into her closet. She carefully hung her choice on a hook located on the back of her door, and placed her choice of shoes next to her bed. Flipping the light, she knew tomorrow was bound to be a long day.

Tsuyu woke in the morning to tapping on her door.

“Tsuyu! Get up!” Mina’s voice came through the door, vowels being dragged out as she spoke.

“It’s open…” Tsuyu’s voice was gravelly with sleep.

She sat up before lifting her arms above her head in a stretch as Mina walked in. Mina, as energetic as ever, happily plopped beside Tsuyu on her bed.

“Why are you just now waking up?” Mina said this with a scolding tone, pulling her mouth into a straight line as she spoke.

“I… Mina, I don’t take so long to get ready, even for something like this. It’s only eleven.” Tsuyu retorted with a yawn.

“I don’t wanna hear it. Come on, get up. We’ve got a big day ahead of us.” Huffing as she stood, Mina grabbed Tsuyu’s arm and pulled her from her spot. It was only then Tsuyu noticed the absurd amount of curlers in her hair.

“So... So many... Isn’t your hair curly enough on its own?”

“Obviously you don’t know much about styling hair. Now shoo, let’s get out of here and get you in a chair.”

Mina dragged Tsuyu from her dorm, eyebrows furrowed as she pulled her friend along into her own room. She needed to be sure Tsuyu looked...

Presentable, and nice. But still like herself. She knew just the thing...

As these events were going down, Ochako was just waking up.

Immediately, she flipped the light on even before removing her gloves.

She hummed to herself as she took care of her normal morning routines, quickly brushing her teeth and styling her hair. Really, she was excited to even go out to eat with her friends, even if she wasn’t sure if she’d tag along to the dance or not.

As she stepped from her bathroom, there was a knock on her door.

“Oh, come in!” Ochako’s still tired voice carried itself across the room.

“Good morning, Ochako! I hope you slept well!” Momo stepped in, quietly shutting the door behind her. She’d obviously begun small preparations for the exciting night ahead, clips and curlers resting comfortably in her hair.

“I did, thank you!” Grinning, Ochako sat on her bed and gestured for Momo to sit with her, “What brings you over so early? We don’t meet until around five, right?”

“Right... About that, Jirou wanted me to ask if you were sure you didn’t want to come to the dance with us. I mean, we’re already driving so two more would be no trouble.”

Ochako stared at her hands for a moment, pursing her lips. She’d thought about it, but she was worried about being a burden to her friends. Even though they assured her she’d be no burden, she still worried about the possibility.

“Ochako, really. If you want to go it’s no trouble at all. We promise.”

Momo put a hand on her friend’s shoulder, a small smile adorning her face.

“You’re absolutely sure?” Ochako’s small eyebrows upturned in a worried manner as her amber eyes stared at her taller friend.

Momo nodded in response, loose hair bobbing with the movement,

“Dinner at 5, okay? We’ll plan to be at the dance around 7. Don’t be late!”

She then left, a speechless Ochako sitting on the cush bed.

Ochako Uraraka wasn't one to attend things like this, more so, she was embarrassed to. She wasn't too sure how well she'd fit with her friends. Not that she felt she was an outcast, but she felt odd in situations like these. Even so, she was determined to have fun.

"Wait, did Momo say two more?"

It had been some time since Tsuyu had gone out to such a nice restaurant. She was nervous, and it showed. She sighed nervously as Mina pulled into the parking space, giving her a helpless look.

"Hey, Tsu, it's not like you to be so torn up, are you okay?"

"I'm... Fine, I'm just not really sure how this will go." Tsuyu's large hands toyed with the end of her large braid.

"Oh, come on, you'll be fine. Now get in there! I believe in you! You're gonna get your girl tonight! Plus, Camie's waiting on me, too. So, uhh.." Mina trailed off, pulling her key from the ignition.

"Right... Right, uh..." Tsuyu clicked her seatbelt off, heaving another sigh and shooting her friend another glance.

Mina squinted at her, sighed, and reached across her lap to open her door, "Go. Get out. You've got this," She punctuated her statement by pushing on Tsuyu's shoulder, urging her to leave the vehicle.

Mina gave her one last thumbs up as she watched her friend enter through the restaurant's front doors. She was rooting Tsuyu on to the very end, as she knew the girl had some trouble when it came to being affectionate and showing it. Even still, Mina knew this would be a step in the right direction, and Tsuyu'd be able to get some feelings and thoughts off of her chest.

When Tsuyu made it into the dining room, her wide eyes scanned the area until she spotted a spiffed up Jirou and Momo. Jirou locked eyes with her and waved her over.

"Just sit and act natural. Ochako is in the bathroom, we stalled her by telling her that her hair pins were falling."

"You look very nice, Tsuyu," Momo piped up.

Tsuyu smiled in return. She wasn't used to looking so put together. Yet, here she sat. Thick hair in a large braid that slung over her shoulder, signature bow remaining tied at the end. Her pinstripe vest paired with the pair of slacks and sleek black tie brought her whole look together. Her face was barren of makeup, but she still looked wonderful nonetheless. It was times like these she was thankful for how nice her skin was; not that she'd ever cared much.

“Do you think this will work?” Tsuyu’s tone was uncertain, she felt more nervous than before.

“Tsuyu, don’t worry. She was saying how she regretted not asking you in the car.” Jirou sipped her water after she spoke, shooting a look in Tsuyu’s direction as she jerked her head at the approaching Ochako.

“Oh-- Tsuyu, I didn’t know you were joining us.” Ochako sat with a nervous laugh, giving Momo a look that screamed ‘Why didn’t you tell me?’

Momo gave her a knowing look in return.

“Ah... Yeah, it was a last minute decision,” She was bad at lying.

Tsuyu realized she was staring at Ochako awkwardly. Though, she thought the sparkly pins placed in her hair with obvious care suited her very well, along with the contrast of her tanned skin with the light color of her dress. It was obvious Ochako Uraraka took care with her appearance. Tsuyu felt underdressed.

“You look nice!” Ochako spit out, as if the words had made a hasty escape from her lips, “I’ve never seen you with a braid before, you should wear your hair like that more often. It, uh, suits you.”

Tsuyu felt her face warm, “Really? Thank you. Mina did it for me, actually. My braids aren’t nearly as neat,” She punctuated her statement with a breathy laugh.

As Ochako opened her mouth to respond, the waiter approached the table, ready for orders. This cut their conversation short.

The four carried a casual conversation during dinner, and the awkward atmosphere quickly lifted as they became more comfortable and less tense. This was the night Tsuyu was looking forward to. This was something she could enjoy. With Ochako around, she felt happy. Even though she didn’t quite know how she’d confront her yet. She’d figure it out eventually, she guessed.

The ride to the venue was loud with laughter and music with heavy bass, much to Jirou’s liking. This, Tsuyu thought, would be a perfect night. And she wouldn’t let anything mess it up.

When the group arrived, Tsuyu made it a point to open Ochako’s door for her and escort her into the venue. This, much to her own surprise, caused a slight blush to appear on Ochako’s face. Tsuyu looked away quickly when she realized she’d been staring once again. This, Tsuyu thought, was going to be a long night. She hoped she wouldn’t be too awkward; messing this up had a bad outcome, in her mind.

At this point, Tsuyu felt helpless. She had every opportunity in the world at this point, but didn’t know how to approach any of them. How was she to get from step one, to the last step? She wasn’t sure. But here, holding

Ochako's hand, she felt as if things were going okay. She just needed to make sure things progressed properly from here.

"Let's dance, Tsuyu!" Ochako's voice pulled Tsuyu from her own thoughts. She then stared down at their hands, seeing how Ochako made it a point to still keep her pinky from touching the back of Tsuyu's hand even when so many things were going on around them.

The music drowned all of Tsuyu's worries out as she watched Ochako dance, holding her hands as Tsuyu rocked back and forth to the beat awkwardly. She wasn't a great dancer, but it was nice to see Ochako enjoying herself as much as she seemed. It made her happy.

This went on for some time, Jirou and Momo had slipped away without the pair noticing, as they were enjoying themselves too much to realize. When she realized, Tsuyu decided it was time to take initiative.

"Ochako," Tsuyu feared her low voice wouldn't catch the other's attention over the music. But still, Ochako stopped dancing and stared at her with curious eyes, "I need to tell you something."

Ochako's eyebrows furrowed, a signal for Tsuyu to continue.

"This... Whole idea... Was because of me. The dinner, and coming here." She stared at her hands as she spoke, causing Ochako to lean in so she could hear more clearly.

"Oh, I caught on during dinner," Ochako laughed, placing a hand on Tsuyu's shoulder, "I don't mind! Tonight's been fun! I like spending time with you. I like you. Really, I was hoping this was how tonight would go..." A nervous laugh this time.

"You... So they weren't lying?" Tsuyu tilted her head to the side, eyes widened with surprise.

"What, did they tell you what I said?"

Tsuyu hummed in affirmation, nodding slowly.

"That's fine. I don't mind. I was sure you'd find out somehow," Ochako's voice was sweet, calming, "Is this a confession, Tsuyu?"

"Erm..." Tsuyu fumbled for words, trying to think of what to say to properly affirm her question; instead, she just nodded.

Before she could say a single word, though, she felt a soft peck at her lips. Her face immediately reddened with realization.

"I mean, I'd prefer if it was. If not, you'd be sending a lot of mixed signals," Ochako kept her face close to Tsuyu's as she snaked her arms around her waist. Tsuyu took this as a cue and placed her hands on Ochako's shoulders.

“No, it... It was. I was never sure how to say anything,” Tsuyu looked away as she spoke, embarrassment creeping up on her, “It’s an odd feeling, normally words aren’t such a hard thing for me.”

“It doesn’t matter. I find it sweet,” Ochako placed a hand under Tsuyu’s chin and placed another tiny kiss on the shorter girl’s mouth.

The two girls stayed like this for a moment, talking quietly amongst themselves regardless of the music and surroundings of other students.

They were enjoying themselves, and the night was a glowing success.

On a nearby table, Tsuyu’s phone lit up with a notification.

TEXT [MINA: You finally did it.]

Favorite Record By Deafmic

Yuu wasn't really sure how it wound up like this.

Well, no, that wasn't completely right. She knew why she was here and how she got here, but part of her just couldn't really believe it. It felt so bizarre, being here, in this apartment, staring at the woman across from her as her red-painted nails deftly wrapped a bandage around Yuu's bleeding arm, a suture half-poking out of the bandage as Kayama Nemuri concentrated hard on wrapping it tight onto her.

Hadn't they just been at each other's throats on national television a few months ago?

"—Your apartment is pretty nice," Yuu frowned, trying to look at anything other than Kayama and attempting to make conversation in the awkward, long silence between them. The silence of the place felt weird, filled only with Kayama's measured, concentrated breaths, and the noise from the city far below the high-rise apartment Kayama lived in.

Her apartment was far nicer than where Yuu lived, and Yuu lived in a decent place. Kayama, though, had taken her back to a luxurious high rise in the busiest part of the city and had dragged her into an elevator and then to a spacious, open apartment. It was clean and comfortable, with dark, matching furniture, art decorating the walls, large picture windows with sheer curtains covering them, and a black and white dog curled up on her couch, fixing Yuu with a curious blue-eyed stare.

They were sitting in the living room area, a breeze from the open windows leading to the balcony making Yuu shiver a little, the sheer curtains billowing with every small gust of wind. Outside, she could see the glittering lights of the city, from the skyscraper across from her residential tower, and she could hear the streets outside and the cars driving and honking in frustration at the traffic. It made sense that Kayama would like a place like this. She seemed like the stereotypical city-woman, someone who needed activity and to be around people all the time, someone who wanted to see the life of the city everywhere she looked.

It felt a little odd to say that Kayama seemed like anything. She was the famous R-rated pro hero Midnight, a woman with supposedly nothing but energy and sex-appeal. Seeing her here, her costume off and a knitted sweater replacing it, hair pulled into a high ponytail, and mask replaced by a set of red glasses—it felt fundamentally wrong, as if this was something she was never supposed to see.

It wasn't like Yuu hadn't been a fan of pro heroes before she became one herself. She'd never really been the fangirl type, but she'd followed a

couple of them, and Midnight's persona had been one of the ones she'd taken inspiration from. One of the things Yuu had was sex appeal, and if it meant furthering her career, then there was no shame in using it.

She turned her gaze back to Kayama, her blue eyes still focusing on bandaging Yuu's arm. Beside them, Yuu's torn costume was sitting in a lump, bloodied and ripped from the battle. Kayama didn't know where she'd put hers—in a closet somewhere, she assumed—but it had also been in a much better state than Yuu's was, given that—

The fact of the matter was that Yuu would've been in a lot more trouble had Kayama not happened to be patrolling the area at the time.

"This isn't too tight, is it?"

Yuu nearly jumped, Kayama raising her head and staring straight at Yuu with those piercing blue eyes of hers. She rapidly glanced around, trying to look at anything other than Kayama herself, and her eyes fell again on Kayama's dog. It stared back at her, seeming to mirror its owner's harsh gaze. Yuu raised her uninjured arm, tangling her fingers in her curly bangs.

"No—no, it's great! Thanks, really!" Between them, the awkward, horrible silence resumed as Kayama bent her head and began tying off the bandage. Yuu desperately searched for more words to say. Behind her, Kayama's dog yawned, and Yuu did her best to give a small laugh, "You know, you and your dog sort of look alike."

Kayama looked up at her again, narrowing her blue eyes at her, "I look like a dog—?"

Fuck.

"No, that's not what I meant," Yuu muttered, glancing down so she wouldn't have to look the other woman in the eyes. That didn't help much, though, because it only reminded her that she was wearing Kayama's clothes. She'd given her a black shirt, loud lettering on it proclaiming that it was advertising some popular radio show, and a set of blue shorts. It was embarrassing, the way both pieces of clothing hung off of her. Kayama was taller than her, had a wider chest and hips, and far more muscular than Yuu was. Her shirt hung down to Yuu's mid-thighs, nearly covering the shorts completely, and those were so baggy in her waist that she had to tie the drawstring tightly just to keep them on her.

"I'm a little confused..." Yuu finally murmured, speaking her mind for the first time since Kayama had showed up to the villain attack and saw Yuu sorely losing a battle badly. "...I was under the impression that you didn't like me. Why do this...?"

Kayama was finishing tying off a knot on the stark-white bandages and didn't even look up at her, though Yuu saw her eyes narrow as she

worked, “You’re a rookie still. There’s a lot you don’t understand, but at least you seem to understand that hero work isn’t all that the media makes it out to be. I don’t dislike you. No hero can dislike another, really. We’re all working towards the same goal and trying to survive.”

Kayama pulled at the bandage, deftly cutting it with a blade in her other hand. With that, she sat back and started placing things back into her first-aid kit, still talking, though it almost sounded as if she were speaking to herself, “Besides, we constantly play things up for the media. People want to see entertaining things. It’s easy to act like that for the cameras and the public, but when it comes down to it... No, I don’t dislike you, Takeyama.”

It was odd to hear her talk like this. She was so serious, not even looking at Yuu as she stared at the older woman, mouth half open.

Kayama snapped the first aid kit shut and got up, tossing a thick lock of black hair over her shoulder with a sigh, shaking her head and looking down at Yuu. Yuu didn’t take her eyes off of her, watching as Kayama seemed to return a little more to her normal self, “Really, though, you have to be more careful! Don’t take on villains bigger than you. God, it’s like saving one of my students from a villain attack!”

The realization hit her once more that Kayama wasn’t just a famous and respected pro hero, but also a respected teacher at the best hero school in the country. Yuu hesitated, but managed to pull her lips into a smirk, “Bigger than me? That just isn’t possible. Or have you forgotten what my quirk is?”

Kayama snorted, but turned away from her, “Please, your quirk may be unforgettable, but it’s not without its faults. Maybe you should be more careful next time so an old lady like me doesn’t have to come rescue you.”

“Yeah,” Yuu agreed, letting her face fall again now that Kayama wasn’t looking at her. She touched a finger to her lips, glancing around and realizing again how nice this apartment was. Her eyes fell on her bandaged arm, looking over the neatness of the care Kayama had given her, “Maybe.”

She left that night with her crumpled, torn costume under one arm, still wearing Kayama’s shirt, shorts, and a borrowed jacket, and clutching a small strip of paper with Kayama’s phone number on it, the other woman’s words ringing in her ears as she made her way to the elevator and then out onto the crowded city streets outside the residential high-rise.

“If you’re ever in need of help again, call me.”

At first, Nemuri didn't know what she was doing. She had no idea she was doing it, no idea what it meant, and it took the help of someone else to figure it out.

Nemuri didn't often work alone, especially on missions, and at thirty-one years old, she had a number of people she worked well with. The Pussycats, Aizawa, Present Mic, and a woman five years younger than her, Tatsuma Ryuuko, the Dragon Hero. Today was a quiet patrol, and she'd been sent out on a mission to take down a villain terrorizing a small residential district, along with the Dragon Hero herself. It was an easy mission, one that went off exactly as planned and very quickly, leaving Nemuri and Ryuuko time to catch up as the police arrived to take in the villain.

As her partner gave her side of the events, though, Nemuri found herself doing the same thing she had for the past two weeks—looking through the hero newsfeed on her phone for a certain district a little ways away from the downtown Nemuri lived in. It'd been a habit of hers for two weeks and she was never sure what she was looking for, given that district wasn't her territory and was typically left to younger, novice heroes.

Today, though, just as it did every few days when she looked at the feed, a name caught her eye.

Mt. Lady apprehends airborne villain after hard fight

She pursed her lips as she read it, scrolling down to the actual text and reading it closely as she sat on the curb of the street, a blanket over her shoulders and the cold wind biting at her exposed skin. In the distance, she could hear Ryuuko calmly giving her report, finishing up talking to the officers who'd sent them out here.

Hospitalized with minor injuries. Stupid girl, Nemuri thought, even as she couldn't take her eyes off of the news story. She read it again, and then once more after that, and was in the middle of trying to find out more on the story when a gentle, quiet voice broke her out of her trance.

"Checking up on a fellow hero, Nemuri-chan?"

Nemuri looked up at the woman standing before her. Both of them were completely unharmed. Their mission had gone exactly as planned and neither of them had suffered any injuries at all. They were both veteran heroes, even if Ryuuko was significantly younger than her. She wasn't like Takeyama. She wasn't so—

Naive? No, that didn't seem right. Takeyama wasn't naive. She had a lot to learn, but she wasn't naive. She was just starting out on her own and she'd learned about the dangers of heroism when she'd self-sacrificed at the hideout raid. She wasn't stupid and maybe... maybe Nemuri was being a little harsh on her.

“Something like that,” Nemuri shut her phone off, tucking it back into the pocket of her suit, standing up and brushing herself off. Was that really what she’d been doing? These past two weeks, two weeks of scrolling through the newsfeed of the district that Takeyama specifically worked in—had she just been checking up on her? It was easy to remember the way that woman’s name had caught her eye every time she’d made the news.

Ryuuko laughed softly, “It’s not like you to be so invested in young heroes. What’s so different about her?”

Nemuri frowned, eyebrows furrowing together in frustration, “It’s not like me to be interested in young heroes? I’m a teacher, Ryuuko-chan. Of course I’m interested in young heroes! How could I not be? It’s my job!”

“No need to get so offended,” Ryuuko offered her a small smile, always calm and patient, even in the face of Nemuri’s bristling annoyance at being called out for her odd interest in Takeyama Yuu. “You know what I meant, though. You’re invested in the education and success of your students, but Mt. Lady wasn’t your student, was she? If I recall correctly from her hero profile, she attended a different school in a different prefecture, didn’t she?”

Nemuri huffed. Ryuuko was right, unfortunately, and they both knew it. Takeyama had never been her student. Nemuri was someone who would take interest if she saw a former student in the news but unless they were her friend or someone she worked with a lot, she rarely took interest in young, emerging heroes. There were so many of them, and not a lot of them made it to her age, whether it was because they found out that the hero life was violent and had a lot of risks, because they found a different calling, or because they were forcefully taken out of commission by an injury that was either fatal or life-damaging. There were a lot of young heroes and by Ryuuko’s age, that number would dwindle a lot. To Nemuri, the younger bunch just wasn’t worth getting all that invested in.

She honestly didn’t know what it was about Takeyama and why she couldn’t just ignore her. Two weeks ago, she could’ve easily just helped her out and then called an ambulance for her so her injuries could’ve been tended to. Nemuri wasn’t about to let anyone get hurt if she could prevent it, but that was where her responsibility ended. She had no obligation—or reason—to take her back to her apartment and give her medical care herself, and she still couldn’t quite figure out why she’d done it. Maybe Takeyama had always interested her. Maybe it was her general disposition—the smugness, the extroversion, the way she could be calm and collected in danger. Maybe it reminded Nemuri of herself when she was younger. Maybe it was what she’d done during the hideout raid, the

way she'd self sacrificed for kids—kids Nemuri taught—when no one else could protect them. She hated to admit it, but she admired Takeyama for what she'd done. Without her, those students could've and most likely would've met a terrible fate.

And maybe the reason why she kept checking up on her now was because of the few things Takeyama had said to her and the small conversation they'd had.

"She wasn't my student," Nemuri confirmed, looking away from Ryuuko, hearing another laugh at her words. The police were finishing up and Nemuri's stomach growled in unhappiness, reminding her that she was due for a break. "It'd be weird if she was."

"Why is that? Do you like her?"

"What?!" Nemuri was far louder than she meant to be, her voice taking on a higher pitch and drawing the attention of a couple of the officers. Her hands balled into fists at her side and her face burned with embarrassment at her small outburst. "No—I hardly know her!"

"Oh, but she's cute, right?" Ryuuko's tone was playful, but it did nothing to help the way Nemuri was bristling at her. Ryuuko reached out, giving her a pat on the shoulder, "I'm just kidding, Nemuri-chan. Let's go take a break and grab some coffee."

This time, when Yuu showed up at Kayama's doorstep, she was alone, her head spinning and throbbing, and this time, she really wasn't sure how she'd gotten here.

She remembered being a ways away and there'd been... some guy she'd been fighting with a... seismic quirk, maybe? She couldn't remember, and it hurt. Everything hurt a lot. But right now, what she did know was that she was standing on Kayama's doorstep, her forehead bleeding a little, listening to the footsteps approaching the door following her short, erratic knock. Honestly, she wasn't even sure how she'd gotten past the security at the front desk, but she was here now, and that was what matter.

How she'd gotten here and why she'd come here when she'd almost definitely been closer to her own home was beyond her, but as Kayama pulled open the door to her apartment, bright light from inside shining right into Yuu's eyes and Kayama's dog curiously sniffing from behind her, Yuu almost felt like crying in relief. There'd been no telling if Kayama was even home, but here she was, staring at Yuu, dressed in a sweater and cat-printed socks, a pair of small shorts just barely showing from under her sweater, and Yuu knew that even if she was going to get lectured and verbally reamed, she was safe here.

Kayama didn't even hesitate, though, nor did she say a word. She only grabbed Yuu's hand, fingers curling around her wrist, warm and there and solid, and pulled her inside, the door locking shut behind them. Yuu went where Kayama directed her, letting her pull her into the bathroom and not fighting as Kayama mopped up the blood from Yuu's face as she sat on the rim of the bathtub, bleakly looking at the older hero.

"What the hell did you do..." It didn't sound like a question, Kayama murmuring it to herself as she wiped at Yuu's forehead. Yuu tried to stay as still as possible, sitting up as straight as she could on the edge of the bathtub. She struggled for words, though in some part of her mind, she realized that Kayama wasn't looking for an answer.

"I... hit my head, I think," She managed to say quietly, her voice sounding nothing like it usually did. The lights in the bathroom were bright, almost too bright, making Yuu want to duck out of the way of them. She forced herself to stay still and Kayama cupped the back of her head, making her tip it back as she cleaned the wound on her forehead. "I guess I don't go up against people with ground-based quirks well, do I?"

She tried to smile, but it was shaky and with the movement, her stomach lurched dangerously. She wobbled a little on the bathtub, and Kayama was fast, wrapping an arm around her and giving her a hard look that bordered on a glare.

"Why are you suddenly so careless?" Kayama asked, and Yuu opened her mouth to respond, but was shut up by Kayama narrowing her eyes at her. "Take your clothes off. You need a shower."

Yuu just tried to grin again, hands shaking as she tried to search out the zipper on her ripped up costume, noting in the back of her spinning, throbbing head that she'd have to set aside some extra budget for all these replacements she was needing.

Kayama helped her find the zipper, helped her pull it down, and helped her out of the skintight suit. Yuu wasn't completely sure where her mask had gone, but it wasn't here and that was one less thing she had to worry about getting off. Kayama all but pushed her into the tub and almost as soon as Yuu felt the cold porcelain against her skin, a rush of cold water hit her, Kayama spraying her directly in the face with the shower head.

"Cold!" Yuu squealed, drawing her knees into her chest.

Kayama mumbled something Yuu didn't quite catch over the roar of the shower, but the water gradually turned to a warmer and Kayama was moving closer, her voice stern as she talked to Yuu, "Stay still and let me take care of you."

Yuu awoke the next morning to three things—bright sunlight streaming through sheer curtains, a heavy, furry warmth on her legs, and the sound

of two people talking in the same room with her. She opened her eyes, pain shooting through her body as she shifted, stretching her legs out and hearing a huff from whatever was sitting on her legs in response. She clenched her eyes shut, pulling what felt like a quilt over her body before she cracked an eye open, holding in a gasp of surprise as what was undeniably Kayama's apartment came into view.

Last night—Oh no, she'd come here—?!

"Eh, Nemuri, this isn't a problem I have a lot of experience with," A tired, male voice drifted from somewhere behind her, and Yuu knew who it was, but in her half-awake state, she couldn't quite identify it.

"Wouldn't Hizashi have been a better person to call? Or one of your girl friends?"

"You just want to go back to bed!" That was Kayama, her voice snapping at the man in the room. It was followed by a clang of what sounded like metal being set down a little too hard on a counter.

"That's always what I want. All day everyday. When you told me you had an emergency, I didn't expect that emergency to be a girl you... slept with...?"

"I didn't—" Kayama's voice was high pitched and met with a harsh shushing from the man in the room. Tired, one of Kayama's friends, someone Yuu recognized...

Shit, it was almost undoubtedly Eraserhead, the guy who taught the class of kids Yuu had gotten so badly injured saving. She didn't know him well, really only knowing that he was a well respected hero who mostly worked underground and had taken a lot of the blame for the things that had happened at the school recently. Yuu didn't keep up with that much, trying to recover lost time since her injury, but she heard about it in passing a lot or whenever she had the chance to check the news.

She'd woken up in Kayama Nemuri's apartment. She was asleep on her couch, dressed in Kayama's clothes, with the other woman's dog at her feet. Kayama had apparently enlisted the help of Eraserhead for some reason, and he was unhappy with being here and Kayama was... also unhappy?

Yuu raised a hand and rubbed at her tired eyes. God, what had she done? Last night was coming back to her in hot, shameful flashes. There was some guy with a seismic quirk she'd been fighting and it'd been difficult to find an open space to transform into her larger form, leaving her at a disadvantage for most of the fight. She'd gotten hurt and somehow had wandered her way here, at which point Kayama had taken her in, basically thrown her into the shower, taken care of her wounds, and then called some old lady over to help her. She didn't remember much after that,

assuming Kayama had used her quirk to put her to sleep, if only to make Yuu stop fussing.

And now she was here, waking up on Kayama's couch to what she could only call a problem.

"I didn't sleep with her," Kayama hissed, lowering her voice. "I just... need emotional support."

"For what? I thought you didn't even like her."

"That's not true!" Kayama shot back, just as Yuu was trying to gather her strength to sit up. She gave a small, soft groan, pulling herself up, just as Kayama continued to talk, "I've been... thinking about her."

"Nemuri," The quiet calling of Kayama's given name was clearly supposed to direct her attention elsewhere, and the two of them fell silent as Yuu rubbed at her eyes, clenching her teeth as she sat up, blonde hair spilling over her shoulders. She pressed a hand against her head, trying to quiet the throbbing of it, and breathed out, slumping forward and raising her head to look in the direction of the voices.

Sure enough, standing in Kayama's kitchen were Kayama Nemuri herself, looking frustrated and a little shocked that Yuu was awake, and beside her, a very tired looking, unkempt man who definitely seemed like he didn't want to be there.

"...Maybe I should go...?" Yuu said, brushing a hand through her hair. Her head still hurt from her injury, but it was dull enough that she could ignore it. She looked away from the two older pros in the kitchen, "I shouldn't have come here in the first place."

"Why did you?" Kayama finally asked, words coming out fast and rushed, as if she'd just been waiting to ask. "Why are you so reckless? I don't understand. How did you end up here?"

Yuu stared out the window, the curtains billowing with the breeze and a cool breeze settling over her. Why had she come here? Why did she keep getting herself into trouble after that first run-in with Kayama? Why did she interest her so much?

The truth was, for the past two weeks, Yuu had gone out of her way to pass by this place, always casting a glance up to where she knew Kayama lived. She hadn't been able to get the woman out of her mind or stop thinking about that night two weeks ago, when Kayama had taken her home, had let her into her private life, had shown an unnecessary amount of kindness to her. Yuu hadn't been able to stop thinking about her or stop picturing Kayama in her apartment, looking just like any other person in the world, and she hadn't been able to stop herself from walking past her street or watching for her in the news.

“I came here because I wanted to see you,” She answered, standing up from the couch. The blanket on her lap fell to the floor and Kayama’s long-haired dog scrambled to get off her feet before she knocked him to the ground. She tucked a long, curling lock of hair behind her ear. “I should get going. I have a cat to feed at home. Thanks for... whatever you did to help me last night.”

She couldn’t stand being under the gazes of the woman she hadn’t been able to get out of her mind and her friend. She quickly found the jacket that she’d come here in, draped over the arm of the couch. She didn’t bother finding her hero costume, giving Kayama a glance over her shoulder as she slipped her shoes on, hesitating before saying one more thing to her.

“If you want to talk, you know where to find me. And if you don’t, you know how to look it up.”

Takeyama let the door slam shut behind her, Nemuri watching with wide eyes as she just left.

“You clearly have some things to get in order,” Shouta said from beside her, giving a nonchalant yawn, as if the woman Nemuri had been obsessively checking in on for the past two weeks hadn’t just walked out the door. “While you do that, I’m gonna take a nap on your couch.”

Nemuri barely heard him. She sunk to the floor beside her kitchen counters, squeezed her eyes shut, and cupped her hands over her mouth. With that, she let out a muffled frustrated scream, startling both Shouta and her dog, and then slumped against the counters, trying to figure out what to do.

Her solution was both simple and somehow, more frustrating.

Every morning for four days, Nemuri woke up an hour earlier than usual, put on her normal running gear, strapped a harness onto Osamu, who was ecstatic at the prospect of a longer run with her in the mornings, picked up his leash, and took off out of the building. Finding Takeyama’s address wasn’t hard, given that the hero network had most of her information public to other heroes, and for four days, Nemuri and her dog ran in the general vicinity of Takeyama’s building. It was further away than her usual route, but it still wasn’t hard to get there, and her apartment complex was easy to find—a small three floor building that Takeyama lived on the second floor of.

Nemuri watched for four days, cursing under her breath every time it was time to go home, shower, and then go to the high school to teach. For four days, there was no sign of Takeyama, and it got to the point where Nemuri had tugged Osamu up the stairs of the complex and stood near Takeyama’s door, her arms crossed over her chest, as if that would make

her come out of her apartment. Still, she didn't knock. Nemuri was a stubborn person and even if she wanted to talk, wanted to do something about the fact that the younger woman was insistently occupying her thoughts, that stubbornness wasn't changing.

On the fifth day, though, something did change.

On the fifth day, when Nemuri jogged into view of Takeyama's apartment complex, the grey light of morning beginning to break over the treetops of the residential neighborhood and with Osamu running happily at her side, she saw the woman she'd been looking for over the past few days.

Leaning on the railing of her balcony, blonde hair draping down her back and dressed in what was undeniably some of the clothes that Nemuri had let her borrow and then not asked her to return, was Takeyama Yuu, her eyes immediately finding Nemuri, like she'd been expecting her.

Nemuri didn't hesitate, jogging to a stop on the grass below Takeyama's apartment. Osamu stopped, too, sniffing at a patch of grass before taking a seat at her feet, panting.

"You really could've just knocked," Takeyama called to her, and Nemuri saw that same smug, horrible smirk on her face that she'd grown used to from seeing her in the media and having her at her house.

"I didn't feel like it," Nemuri frowned, trying her best to pout and act like she didn't care much. The opposite was true—she was relieved that Takeyama had met her halfway. She'd realized, over the past few days, that if she couldn't get the other woman out of her head, then the best course of action was to just accept it and not try to stop it. Maybe giving it a shot was the best.

Nemuri took a breath, looking up at Takeyama, leaning on her balcony,

"Come get breakfast with me."

"What is this, Kayama? A date?" Despite her usual smug confidence, Nemuri could almost hear a certain nervousness in her voice. It was uncharacteristic but—it was cute.

"I was thinking that, yeah," Nemuri grinned a wicked smile, narrowing her eyes a little. "You can just call me Nemuri, by the way. I think after last night, that's only appropriate. Yes or no, Yuu-chan?"

There wasn't a single moment of hesitation, Takeyama pulling away from the railing and standing back up, "I'll be down in five minutes and I'll choose the place we go."

Nemuri breathed another sigh of relief.

Maybe Takeyama had a lot to learn and maybe their personalities clashed a little, but there was something about her that drew Nemuri in, something that interested her in a way that no one had in a long time. She wasn't sure where this was headed, but honestly—

A date seemed like a good start.

Being

By Chickadee

If someone told Ochako that the girl she despised during the license exam would end up becoming her girlfriend, she would have probably denied your words with a hearty laugh and continued to sigh towards Izuku from afar.

Yet, one misunderstanding lead to more understandings and maybe some complicated feelings mixed in there and well...they were known now as the fashionistas who held hands.

Alright, maybe calling them fashionistas wasn't the right word, especially since Ochako didn't have the necessary funds to go beyond a simple shirt and some shorts and there were a few moments where being next to Camie made her feel almost invisible with how extravagant her girlfriend went all out in her appearance. However, non stops compliments of their relationship all reeled back to Ochako and it put her jealousy at ease.

Despite Camie's nature to be bold and always make a statement, there weren't many times that Ochako felt inferior to her girlfriend, which was a huge step considering her self esteem needed major work. In fact, there were moments that her confidence boosted to an all time high around Camie and Ochako felt she could conquer the world.

But there were definitely times where her confidence was shot down faster than a bullet.

To sum up, ever since Ochako was little girl, money was the sole reason she didn't have much of a childhood....or really anything if one looked at it. With her parents' construction business constantly creating a financial burden on their bank account, there were many things that had to be cut back, including but not limited to: clothes that were not hand me downs, birthday parties, birthday cakes, field trips, fun family outings, etc. In comparison to other kids, Ochako didn't really have much a childhood and had to spend time making art with nature instead of leveling up Pokemon on the latest technological device.

Camie, on the other hand, had it all. Whatever she wanted, she got it on a shiny silver platter....literally. Money was never an issue for all of Camie's life and she was gifted with all types of luxuries. Fortunately, she was raised with the right morals so she never had a demeaning attitude, but it still didn't change the fact that most people went to her first after a weekend to know what riveting adventures she was up to, especially the ones that had to be kept more lowkey due to their school's strict rules.

Which is why Camie's jaw dropped when finding out that Ochako hadn't done basically anything in her time of living.

It all started with a conversation that ended with the question, "Oh, you've done that before, right Ochako?" and was answered with a bashful shake. Suddenly, more similar questions appeared such as: "Have you gone to a cafe?" "What do you mean you've never been the zoo?" "How is it possible that you have lived on this planet and never gone to Disneyland?" and all Ochako could do was just try to clue in what experiences those places have since it was enough to baffle Camie that she never went through them before. At the question, "What have you done?", Ochako meekly explained her art portraits with leaves and crushed berries that lead to the bringing up of her past. After a long winded explanation, Camie was left in a baffled position until she promised Ochako that one day, she was going to let Ochako experience stuff that would "rock her socks off". At the declaration, Ochako just nodded her head, thinking it was another mannerism.

Boy was she wrong.

Today didn't begin how Ochako expected.

Real talk, no one would have really expected to be blindfolded the mere second they wake up. It's unexpected and frankly gives off a "Taken" vibe that makes one feel like the CIA is ransacking their house in a mission to find some pristine documents that are somehow filed away in a drawer of knickers that they didn't even know they owned. Even Ochako would have used the skills Gunhead taught her to create broken ribs and flipped human beings.

But this was no ordinary person who blindfold her. It was Camie, aka the girlfriend who was notorious for engaging in some....unusual behaviors. Ochako loved her dearly, but this counted as one of the moments she questioned why that was the case.

"Camie??? What's going on?? What's with the blindfold??" Ochako began to question, patting down on the tightened fabric to figure it's endpoints. Feeling the edge, her fingertips lightly tugged it upward until it was smacked away that left a small sting on her hand. A small giggle appeared in front of Ochako that made her heart race a few more beats than normal. Well, maybe a bit more than that description.....alright, a lot more than that.

Without a proper warning, Ochako found her body lifting up from the curled position she inhabited and a pair of hands clasped on her waist while being pushed up against a voluptuous body of familiarity. Little breaths tickled her ear as the crook of her shorts tinkered against her skin

before dropping to the floor in an expected heap. Instinctively, when her favorite pair of jeans reached her feet, Ochako stepped into them, allowing the denim to shimmy upwards until they placed themselves on the nook of her hips and were fastened in with a delicate care that certainly came from a foreigner.

“Yo, what’s with all the questions this morning? I haven’t even had my coffee yet and you know I can’t do anything unless I got that brew going on, ya know what I mean?” Camie finally spoke out, using her special jargon as she pulled Ochako’s loose tank off and replaced it with a form fitting shirt that amplified certain features of her petite girlfriend. Ochako could only see a void of darkness but she could feel Camie’s face contorting in concentration before relaxing with a small nudge of shoes against her feet. Slipping them on, she was then bathed in spritzes of tangy yet sweet performance that flooded her nostrils. Little shakes of hair circled near Ochako’s ear as adjustments were made and she could even hear the click of a pin that clipped onto the side of her head. Before she could speak up once more, Camie gave out a sound of a smirk against wrinkled fabric, possibly from her placing hands on hips. “Wow, you’re looking pretty rad, girl. Damn do I have skills,” she spoke mostly for herself while Ochako rolled her eyes against the pressure of her blindfold. “Camie, what’s going on?? Why am I-?” Ochako asked again until an elegant finger pressed against her lips, accompanying it with small shush noises.

“Now, now Ochako! I totally have a huge surprise for you today so be excited!”

“I mean, it’s a tad bit hard to be super excited when I’m blindfolded like this. I won’t lie, I’m a bit scared-”

“What? You’re scared?? Girl, you know this is me we’re talking about!”

“That’s kinda of the point....”

“WOW Ochako! Do you not trust me?? Wait, actually, don’t answer that. C’mon,” Camie bubbled out, grabbing Ochako’s hand that created a spark of electricity jolting throughout her entire body. Suddenly, the temporary blinded girl began to resume movement in her limbs, though it was more wobbled in nature due to the lack of senses she was able to partake in. The only thing she could feel was the silky grasp from Camie’s hand and the different textures of the floor with each step she took and it became an act of trust that she had to thrust towards Camie.

Which, for anyone else, that wouldn’t ring as a problem for Ochako. Even Katsuki, the man charged with resilient fire of selfishness, would be

someone that she could put trust in that he would be able to guide her through safe measures.

But with Camie? Well....no amount of love could ease the pent up anxiety pounding against her heart.

Especially when the first hurdle was getting her down some stairs and into a car. Normally, it would be a smooth transition: Ochako would delicately place her foot on the receding steps until she sauntered down with ease and slink into the space the open car door provided. Yet, today came with twisted ankles, many clashes behind Camie's curved back, and bumps on the side of her head that took the curve of the car's upper rim.

Today was just starting out perfectly.

"Alright, here we go!" Camie huffed out when she finally entered the car, only known by Ochako from the pleather crusting in at the sudden pressure her weight created. Soon, the rumblings of the engine vibrated under Ochako's legs and she could feel the lurch of movement as the car pulled out from the driveway and onto the road.

The ride consisted of Camie's off tune karaoke of rap blasting past all the speakers and non stop rhetorical thoughts bouncing off Ochako's mind. Camie already had the tendencies of reckless driving that instilled fear into Ochako with her eyes open, so, with having loss of sight, she just had to grip on her seat and hope that enough prayers would reach God to render them to their destination safely.

Fortunately, despite the ride being unnecessarily elongated, Ochako could hear Camie's curses before pulling into a spot and killing all life into the car, rendering it stationary and quiet for the moment. "Woo! We're finally here!" Her girlfriend yelled out with a defining kick attached to her words before the scene fell silent again. Though, that only lasted mere moments until Ochako's door opened up once more and she was tugged through by cheers and loving grips. "Okaaay, follow close behind me sweetie!"

Camie teased with overextended syllables as she pulled Ochako alongside her down a cement pathway.

Perking her ears up, Ochako tried to decipher where they were but was only met with indiscriminate chatter and new trend pop music with gnarly beats. Her nose even picked up on exotic scents that seemingly changed with every quartet of strides. She had an inkling they were at the mall until it was confirmed with more prominent music and a voice asking if they needed assistance. Though, that was the most Ochako was able to get since she found herself sitting down on a chair (or was it a bench? She couldn't tell) and waited for any upcoming instructions.

Although, that didn't appear immediately as she continued to wait and wait even more. At this point, she couldn't even hear Camie's voice, which only lead to electrifying anxiety being zapped into Ochako with every passing moment. If this didn't already feel like a kidnapping movie, it certainly did now and plans filtered through her mind, trying to dissect her position in escape routes without allowing physical features to tell the true story.

“O-CHAA-KKOOOO!!!” The sudden wave of her name echoed through the confound walls, rippling closer and closer until the owner's presence clouded the shared space. A slam emitted from a now closed door and, without much more warning, hands began to slide all over Ochako's corpse, pulling at the fabric that hugged her skin. Wafts of cool breeze soon attacked her body as each item was delicately removed, rendering her in an intimate position with only intimates on.

Conservatively, Ochako's arms folded across her midsection in a futile effort to ward off stares until Camie ripped them off from there and positioned their figure upwards. Questions bloomed onto the tip of her tongue until they were drained away from the focus of unusual clothes pushing against her. Everything about this new garment was tight and form fitting and barely fit over her chest as it snuggly sat below but gasps from her fashionable girlfriend told her it was worthy of her expectations. Which, for the first try, is pretty remarkable. Only certain selections caught her attention as such so there had to be something revolutionary about this outfit and frustration bubbled in Ochako with wanting to rip off the blindfold and set her eyes on the pattern.

But then, she thought of Camie's inaudible whale noises of protests with whimpers attached to it and immediately the intention was washed away. Trying to be gentle, Ochako patted down the sides of her new outfit (which is where she deciphered it to be a dress and a light smile tugged at her lips since dresses were a desired, foreign entity that she couldn't afford), trying to find the rim of the skirt. When she came across the all too familiar hem seam, she gripped her fingers around it and began to pull it upwards, that is until another hand slapped it away. “Oww...” Ochako mumbled to herself as she rubbed the spot, recalling the sting it had endured earlier from the first sneak attack.

“L-O-L, what are you doing??” Camie asked, breaking the comotion from continuing.

“I...I was just going to take it off since you liked it...” Ochako stuttered out with double back tracks on where the confusion resided. Her fingers fiddled at the tips, pressing against the feline pads to feel the tender touch they had.

An audible smirk boomed from Camie and her hand tore apart one of Ochako's to gently fold it within hers. "Ha ha Ochako! You're so funny!" Noticing her girlfriend's tilted head, Camie purred out a loving coo. "I want you to wear it because I LOOVVEE it on you! You look so rad! Now, come with me! We gotta pay for it, or else the cops will get on our asses and I do not want them spoiling my day." She sassily spoke out as she dragged Ochako through a darkened maze of clothing racks and stocked shelves before making it to the end with a hearty voice asking them if they found everything ok today.

Due to muffled voices and secrets, Ochako wasn't able to hear anything between their exchange except for the part where she had to scoot inwards to reach the lasered machine that registered her product. Sweat suddenly appeared on the side of her head with each ruffle Camie did of her wallet and only thoughts of expense watered in her mind, making her nervous on all the money Camie threw at her with this visit. Fortunately, the transaction ended sooner than Ochako thought and she was once again pulled to the outside where the potent sounds of music drifted off to mingle in open space.

Yet, despite Ochako's expectations, the same story happened in a variety of other stores, though with different items being placed on her that made her question where all her initial items went. In one store, she felt fur warming her ankles with each trudge she made. In another, light metal gingerly placed itself onto her skin while her ears felt a teasing tug and her sternum matching with a medallion pressed against it. She even had the opportunity to remove the blindfold for a bit as makeup brushed against features of her face while sections of her hair went through a curling heat that left little ringlets she could feel against her cheek. With each store came new items adorned on Ochako and her breath could only hitch thinking of all the money Camie was spending for an event that she wasn't even aware about.

After purchasing a parka style jacket, the couple continued to traverse in a straight path, leaving the posh complexes behind and moving towards bustling movement and chatters of all topics. The noise amplified to a numbing degree, making it hard to distinguish Camie's tone throughout the rest. "Camie?? What are we doing?? Where are we??" Ochako asked, bringing old questions up again to see if maybe, just maybe, she would let her in on a little fragment of what was going on.

"Fam, are we seriously on that again? It's a surprise!" She landed with a discernible wink that came in a package with an air kiss, proving that no amount of questions could shake answers out of her frame. A little puff escaped Ochako's lips that immediately was followed up by a tight

squeeze on her fingers. "Listen, I know that sometimes I go off the hook and do some crazy shit, but trust me on this. You're going to hella love it. I got this, so just sit tight and relax!" Camie reassured, syringing massive amount of chill vibes into Ochako that loosened up her constricted muscles. She threw her neck down in a sincere nod, giving a trusting smile that was reciprocated with a more appreciative grip. The moment soon ended with hurried steps that carried more anticipation. "Alright! Let's get some food!" And with that statement, a little chime ringed the new spot of their journey.

The minute Ochako stepped into the shop, scents of candy and sweets reseeded into her nose, flaring her taste buds. While she couldn't see specifics of garnishes or layouts, images of pastel paint and white ribbons decorating a harajuku style cafe popped into her mind and she could already feel her body redefining itself in cute measures that made her feel bubbly and perky. Even without using her eyes, Ochako could tell she entered into a delectable heaven taken from her dreams and her mouth began to salivate at the mere thought of trying one of their foods. Camie hauled her through the feathery carpet and seated her a chair that felt cotton squished her body in a blanketed hug. Rotating her hands around the surroundings, she could feel the silky texture of the seat and wall perpendicularly hitting the table, making the judgement that she was constricted in a booth.

"Wait here for a bit," Camie breathed out before sauntering away, leaving Ochako in a buzzed quietness. Pop music created rhythmic beats in Ochako's heart, making her foot tap as her body swayed with the tempo. Her lips quietly formed the words of the song and a little whisper followed out, copying the vocal mannerisms of the artist. With restricted eyesight, her senses began to flare up and entrapped her in a singular melody. A little world capsulated around her, leaving her to relish in her fantasies of being a singer, model, rockstar, actress, an entertainer-!

"I'M BAACCKKK!!" An extended cheer came out, piercing into Ochako's thoughts and shattering them in interruption as clanks of plates ringed against the table. A gasp emerged from Ochako, spooking her out to a point where she was sure that she could see glimmers of her ghost swimming upwards. Pressing her hand against her chest, she practiced calming breaths that didn't much help to relax her but did give Camie a trembling laugh. "O-M-G, did I give you a scare??" She asked behind snickers, making Ochako embarrassingly nod in affirmation. Only more laughs ensued. "That's too funny, like too freaking funny. You look like a ghost came and shook you hardcore. Were you thinking of singing again?"

Camie called out, completely peeling away Ochako's thoughts and making them publicly known to their surrounding neighbors.

"Um...no...not really....I mean...." She kept drifting off, her index fingers pointing towards each other as they pushed upwards in a nervous fashion. The cheeks buds stationary on her face lit up like a neon sign that flashingly pointed towards the truth.

"Fam, you like suck at lying. Don't ever take a lie detector test, kay?"

Camie spoke out again, though this time it was accompanied with cutting sounds from a knife that clanged against porcelain. Suddenly, Ochako felt a presence by her face and sat with a question mark featured before the table shifted under Camie's weight. "Now, open up nice and wide for me?" She quietly asked, her tone seducing Ochako under a sweet spell that magically had her lips part open on command.

From only air lingering in, her mouth was then filled with creamy textures that melted immediately and spread across her tongue. It was almost like a cheesecake that was mostly molded by vanilla with slight swirls of strawberry mingling around in the soft cream. There was even a slight crunch that burst open and released bits of a cinnamon cookie that amplified the taste to an even higher degree. Behind the blindfold, Ochako's eyes widened in shock and a hand flew to her mouth, guarding the flavorful tastes within their human prison. "This! It's so good!" Ochako finally managed to speak out after gently swallowing the sweet treat, savoring the aftertaste that remained. "Is there anymore??" She asked with a slight bounce to her seated posture, vibrating the seat in anticipation.

"Hell yea, plus there's other stuff you gotta try too. Now, open," and with the same command, Ochako opened her mouth once more and allowed her mouth to swim in the addictive tastes that left her wanting more and more. With each gulp, she opened up for the next spoonful that Camie provided. And it didn't even stop at the last bit of the cheesecake. Different textures lovingly hugged her teeth as she continued to chew them further into her taste buds. Cupcakes, cakes, mouses, even balls of mochi, you name it, if it was sweet, more than likely Camie purchased it to feed Ochako with. Even though she couldn't see how much she was consuming, each bite fluttered those thoughts away and savored the gourmet tastes, mentally noting all the different kinds of flavors concentrated in each dessert.

"Alright, last one before we gotta go again," Camie warned as Ochako opened her mouth for the last time, reluctantly finishing the piece inside her mouth to try to elongate the delectable as much as humanly possible. Eventually, the need arose and she bitterly swallowed it down, leaving

only the aftermath to stick around. “Okay, on a scale of 1 to hell yea, how did you think of this place?”

“Amazing! Fantastic! It was so good! Everything tasted so different but it was still amazing! I definitely want to come back here! What’s this place called??” Ochako forgetfully slipped out as she cupped her cheeks with her hands, tilting her head back and forth in bliss. Her eyes closed for a few seconds, abiding in this state for as long as possible.

A small chuckle could be heard from Camie’s side and, immediately, her weight soon lifted away from the table and a scratching sound appeared. Her steps moved towards Ochako and pulled her back up to a standing position to continue their excursion. “I’ll tell ya later since we aren’t done with the surprises. Plus, we’re running kinda late so we gotta hurry.” “Running late? Where are we going?”

But the answer never came and silence plagued the couple as they maneuvered back through the crowded junctions of the mall. All their motions came in a blur to Ochako and soon enough, they reached the echo chamber of the parking lot where she found herself adjusting back into Camie’s car. Despite the only noise coming from hard hitting rap, there was an aura about Camie that screamed excitement and anticipation and only could make Ochako’s legs throb in a special type of anxiety. There had to be a justified reason why Camie was not only super jittery but speeding violently down the highway and Ochako’s curiosity gnawed at her with each exchange they made through weaves of lanes.

With an estimation of 7 rap songs, the speed of the vehicle reduced considerably with more turns attached to it. Yet, while the car was going slower, Ochako’s heart could only beat faster and her breaths became more rugged. Her arms curved into each other and she bundled into herself to protect from any impact.

4 rap songs later and a curved maneuver was made, usually done when parking. The rums of the car soon vanished, leaving them in a frozen spot. “FINALLY! We are here!” Ochako’s driver shouted, echoing her sentiment within the metal that surrounded them. Soon, cool breeze washed in from a sudden opening of a car door. In moments, Ochako’s side burst open, freezing her tense muscles in place. “C’mon Ochako! You legit don’t want to miss this at all,” coaxed the familiar voice next to her, making her slowly unstick her rigid legs and pulse them out to help her land a standing position.

The second she stood up and allowed gravity to keep her body upright, she had to kindle heat into her tendons once more as Camie yanked her through heavily packed cars. With each step she took, Ochako could hear sounds of families mingling with each other, happiness etched in their

voices as names of animals spoke out. It sounded chaotic and messy but also meshed with a style of bittersweetness that had her slightly wish she had this experience with her family when she was in her younger years. Everything around her sounded childish and young, displacing her back into her past in a type of concern and slight envy.

The next steps in their journey had to have more care involved in them that got Camie to be more instructional with her remarks. At some point, Camie even cupped her hands around Ochako's ears to deflect any sounds from ricocheting inside auditory canals. All sounds became muddled and she could barely make out any task told her, causing her girlfriend to be more flexible on getting from the different points.

A turnstile later, Ochako continued to follow her lead with access to the sounds around her. Her head twisted and turned at all the exotic noises beamed around her, having various different origins that had her attempting to find it. Everything suddenly turned messy, making her scene contorted in different stimuli that sought to whisk her attention away.

Then, they came to stop.

They stood side by side for a moment, taking in the heat of each other's hands until Camie left with one last squeeze. Her hands appeared at the back of Ochako's head, creating pressure with a fiddling feeling shifting through the curls in her hair. The tight knot became looser until the last stretch appeared, though it was stuck from Camie's pull on it. "Are you ready to see your surprise?"

"Yes."

"Well, here it goes." Once the exchange of whispers finished, the cloth that had been attached lost its restriction and her chocolate eyes gained visibility once more.

Though, only for a while until tears rose up from the creases of her eyes. Laid in front of her was the beginning entrance of a zoo, filled with people and habitats of animals. While it didn't contain the same level of magic as Disneyland, the glowing effect residing from the blindfold turned into a golden haven that had shimmers of white glittering around the structures. Various signs pointed in different directions, letting guests choose their path through this labyrinth of alluring animals. While Ochako's outer layer remained in the same position, her inner core reverted back into a child and jerked at her to move in a frenzy of circles to see all that the zoo has to offer.

Her mesmiration broke off when a pair of hands pressed against her shoulders, radiating heat through the union. "So? Whaddya think? Pretty nifty, huh?"

Without warning, Ochako tore away from her hold and twisted herself into Camie, rushing to jump into her arms and embrace her curved stature. Locking her arms around Camie's neck, she nuzzled into the crater of the opposite shoulder and tears faltered down her cheek. Gratitude could only be heard in Ochako's voice as whimpers leaked out, waving all her words. Only thoughts of love and undeservingness were played in her mind and she truly believed that she could never love someone else more than she loved Camie in this moment. Even her arms around Ochako's waist were too pure and magical and she could only hope that they would never lose their grip.

Finally, Ochako released herself from her love, noticing the change in fabric as she went to clear her cheeks of any tear stains. Upon further inspection, instead of the usual short and shirt getup she had going on, she was transformed into an arctic princess. Over everything, she had a pastel pink and white parka that made her look comfy and cozy. Beneath that was a flowy pink and white polka dress that accompanied black tights and white knee high boots.

For one of the first times in Ochako's life, she didn't feel like the poor girl who looked outside of windows and coveted the girls who would pass buy in fashionable trends. Today, she was the girl she always wished she could be and nothing less than a smile appeared on her face.

"I think nifty doesn't even cover it. In fact, I'm just so happy that I can't even put it into words." She then took Camie's hand into hers and crinkled her eyes in a tranquil peace that created a calming effect. "Thank you so much Camie. I don't know what I would do without you."

However, before their moment could turn into a truly romantic scene in a movie, it was Ochako's turn to squeeze her hand and build up the hyperactivity between the two. Her relaxed face contorted to one of a child's, smiles even brimming the edges of her pupils. "And definitely, we can't waste today! I've never been to the zoo before so I want to see everything! Come on!" She excitedly said, heaving Camie against her running steps. Laughter materialized between the both of them with each stride, lingering their happiness in the air as their love whirled around them.

Artists



✉ Tommy
shedbarf
eijikatsu **t**



Mutiart
mutiartsomething **t**



✉ Emma
mourningdewdles
mourningdewdles **t**



Eri Jaime
erjaimet **t**



pinkyashidos
✉ pinkyashidos
pinkyashidos **t**



✉ Neko
nekocommission
nekosisterart **t**



✉ Nolwenn
ghostjellyfishtime
frogiroppt **t**



✉ Ollie
idolxtry
horuichis **o**



Bel **t**
paradoxicallyspacial



✉ Jade
freelancerkiwi
nephritecomics **t**



Lee
doucet **t**



Connie
condacending **t**

Artists



Artists

Mods



Mod Eli
electrogaymer^t



Mod Elliot
mirthfulringleader
rosyabomination^t

Writers

"Being"

✉ Chickadee
ultimatespacekiddo
exoticfairytail ✂

"The One Constant"

✉ Amaru
wolfiecaw
redbluezero ✂

"Favorite Record"

✉ Dave
deafmic
deafmic^t

"You Finally Did It"

✉ Ariems
softpixelpng
ariems 